



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"CERTIFICATION OF VISALIA COMMUNITY BANK ALLOWS FOR RAPID LOAN RESPONSE TO LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS CUSTOMERS"

Fresno, CA - Small businesses in the Central San Joaquin Valley are able to receive a quicker answer on applications for Small Business Administration (SBA) loans under SBA's Preferred Lenders Program which delegates Visalia Community Bank special authorization to process SBA Guaranteed Loans. Visalia Community Bank a 27-year participant in SBA lending is very involved and committed to small business financing. Visalia Community Bank is Visalia's oldest locally owned and operated financial institution, with locations in Visalia and Exeter.

The bank's authorization to participate in SBA's Preferred Lenders Program (PLP) was announced by Carlos G. Mendoza, District Director of the Fresno SBA District Office. The presentation of the certification will be made to Visalia Community Bank during a special ceremony on Wednesday, October 20 in Visalia.

Preferred Lenders are SBA's most active and committed lenders and receive a substantial delegation of authority from SBA. SBA gives PLP lenders a one-day loan processing turnaround time on their loan applications. Most of SBA's loans are made under the guaranty loan program by private sector lenders.

Upon hearing of the certification, Tom Beene, President of Visalia Community Bank said, "As a dedicated lender to small business in the communities we serve we are delighted to receive certification as a PLP lender. This designation will allow us to respond quicker to loan requests and continue to provide quality financial assistance to our small business customers."

"SBA clearly has a strong partnership with Visalia Community Bank which in turn is helpful for all businesses. Over the past two years the bank has assisted nine businesses in the Central Valley with SBA loans for a total of \$2.6 million in guaranteed lending," said Mendoza.

Mendoza went on to say, "The bank has also distinguished itself as being a proactive lender with a special emphasis in assisting small businesses with reasonable access to capital. Financial assistance to businesses will certainly help the local economies and we appreciate the bank's commitment."

For further information about the presentation ceremony please contact Melende Ward, Fresno SBA District Office at (559) 487-5791, ext 143 or Jerry Hawkins, Visalia Community Bank at (559) 625-8733.